Fwd

Dear Mary and Jim, 6/16/77

I write you both not only to save time but because I want Mary to know about Jim's call off last night about "The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald."

Not only do I want to thank you both but I owe each an apology I'll come to.

My impression is that the A.M.American broadcast may do some good. It will take time before we can find out. I judge this from the reaction of the show staff. Even Hartman left the studio during a tape presentation to come and talk to me. His producer, who had done the same thing, had to come and grab him. We'd have talked longer if he did not have to take his wife to the obstetrician.

But on top of all that went before it I was tired when I got home. So tired that just before supper I fell asleep at my desk going over the mail, much from federal agencies. I've not finished it yet. Lil roused me and had me move to where I could doze more comfortably. I may not lie down in the supports I wear daytime. She had to rouse me and make me walk around three times before I could stay awake. I also may not doze this way for more than 20 minutes at a time.

While I was not with it she packaged the books of which I had notes in my wallet, the one sure way of not forgetting them. Otherwise I'd have inscribed them.

Perhaps the reception I received from Aynesworth can be transferred to Mary. In part I believe he has, without meeting me, separated me from the Lanes because I have never exploited as they do. In part I think it is because he is aware of my factual rather than politican criticism of the House assassins. This tells him that we are not all nuts, that we have and live by concepts of right and wrong, and that we do not consider what is wrong for others, like the Warren Commission, to be right for the House assassins or ourselves. Anyway, his desire to know what the recodds show on Priscilla Johnson Mcmillan is at least indicative of a desire to know about what might be considered his side, that of prior support for the Commission. So because Mary may have more than I do and certainly can retrieve what she has easier than I now can I'm very pleased she is going to provide these records to him. If Mary has not yet done this I'd like to suggest that she do it with a short covering letter of which she sends me a copy because I believe that I will be hearing from him. There are many reporters all around the country who do check developments with me. To now none from Dallas. I am hopeful that this can be the beginning of a different Establishment attitude toward you and all of us in Texas. What Hugh writes can tend this way. It can certainly distinguish between those of us who are responsible and the nuts and let it be known that as Jim Lesar puts it there is a third position on this subject, a responsible one. (If I find time before I take Lil grocery shopping this a.m. I'll drop Hugh a note and enclose a carbon.)

Jim's concern is over "The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald." He wants to know what the law permits on this. I was still a little groggy when he called. Later I phoned Jim Lesar. Jim was at the law library and I had to go to bed so I've not heard back. I left word. While I do not suggest that Mary seek to involve her firm I do believe that there will be a need for Dallas counsel. My non-lawyer's opinion is that this involves a question of representation, meaning a portrayal of Jim Tague without his permission. I believe the law does protect him against this. I believe further than because he is well-known as the only other one wounded in the JFK assassination and because of the title of this newest crap there is no way the changing of name can be claimed not to be a portrayal. However, I also believe that this may be a specialized area of law. I do not think Jim should make any move without counsel. I do believe that with a properly-phrased written notice and request he should be able to obtain a script promptly and that once Mary and I go over it there will be legitimate basis for going farthur. There is no chance the script can be other than more official propaganda. If I were Jim I'd regard being involved in this as very hurtful. My guess is that their only out might be to be totally faithful to the testimony he gave. My belief is that they cannot be, from what I have been doing recently. If there were a good Dallas lawyer who is willing to take the time and wants all of this exploitation of a great tragedy ended I think he could do much with this situation.

Wha t was odd about the A.M. America Show is that they used only one of the questions they asked me in advance. All the rest was improvised from that, teleprompter or no teleprompter. I go into this on the chance that in her personal relationships with those two very good young reporters Bob Sirkin and Bill O'Reilly Mary might be able to get accross to them that they'll learn more and get more they can use if they do not try to impose a doctrine on those they interview as they did in their essentially philosophical beginning of the radio show. They were really trying to get me to say what they wantx, not what I believe. This made it necessary for me to preserve my own position, in turn meaning longer answers, in part to avoid being critical of them. The questions I was asked on A.M.America made short, direct answers possible. This is what they all want.

All is now up and about so I close with renewed thanks to you all for your so many kindnesses. It is not enough to know that we all believe in the same thing and thus have common interests. You people all want farthur than that and I do appreciate it very much. It has always been that way in Dallas, at least with me. That I can talk with and establish a friendly relationship with those considered of "the other side" down there is gratifying to me and I think at least in most cases speaks well of the others.

To now there has been but a single negative, Zapruder, with whom I tangled. I did not expect anything of the Paines. I merely wanted to get a feel of them. All others were positives.

My thanks to you all,